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bed philosophers of *his* day, serves to confirm this opinion.

In this however, we err widely : the genuine philosophers of Greece were men earnest in the pursuit of wisdom : they sought after that species of knowledge, which influences the actions of men, and advances the interests of society.

Thus Zeno of Elea, distinguished himself by improving the art of reasoning, and by magnanimously exposing himself to the fury of a tyrant, from whose possession he had endeavoured to rescue his native place, he proved, that his was not theoretic wisdom. Zeno, the founder of the stoic sect, aimed at the improvement of mankind by a clear exposition of the excellence of virtue, and hatefulness of vice, exhibiting in his own life such a consistency with his doctrines, as procured him general esteem, and stamped influence on his words. But, without particularising Plato, Aristotle, and others ; Pythagoras is himself a pregnant instance of their active interference in the affairs of men. After having travelled through all the countries, then the depositories of knowledge, he fixed his residence at Crotona in Italy.—Here by the charms of his person, his skill in the manly exercises, and his superiority in mental acquirements, he obtained unlimited influence. This influence he exerted so effectually, that out of a people sunk in sensuality and sloth, he formed, as it were, a new race, distinguished by manly energy, and the useful virtues.

“Go not by the highway,” then cannot be inferred to enjoin seclusion from the world : but would seem rather to contain the advice, conveyed from high authority in the words, “thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.” Origen and

Erasmus give nearly the same explanation, and advert to the broad and narrow way spoken of in the new testament. The letter Y, called the Samian letter, from its adaptation by the Samian sage, is supposed to have been chosen to convey similar instruction, or rather, as a varied way of conveying the same instruction. The broad part of the letter represents the way of folly, ignorance, and death, trodden by the multitude—the narrow part stands the representative of the useful course of the wise man, a course, whence man is more liable to deviate, inasmuch as self-control is difficult of attainment, while self-gratification continually solicits.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

REPLY OF SOLON TO OBSERVATIONS
ON HIS PAPER ON THE SUNDAY
SCHOOL-HOUSE.

To the proprietors of the B.M.M.

AT the close of your monthly retrospect of politics for October last, I observed some very severe strictures on my reply to the concluding part of that article, for the preceding month, on the subject of the Sunday School-house then building.

To be replied to by argument, and with temper, is no matter of surprise to me, but to be attacked and abused with such violence on that part of my paper, which was avowedly suppressed—and by my own consent suppressed, has excited a degree of astonishment in my mind which I never expected to feel at the conduct of the managers of the Belfast Magazine. Immediately after the publication of the number for October, I prepared and forwarded a remonstrance, and was told it was sent to one of your ma-

nagers for judgment; but on the appearance of the next number, and finding no notice taken of it, I applied to you by note for the manuscript, and received for answer—you had never seen it. I also made application to the person to whom I was informed it had been sent, and from him I received a similar answer. The paper *may* have been lost without meeting the eye of either—I therefore take the liberty of repeating some of the observations contained in it, which I hope for the sake of justice, and for the interest of the work you are concerned in, you will send forth to the world, and without mutilation allow it to be judged of by the public—and if it merits a reply, let it be answered in a cool and temperate manner, by argument, and not by abuse.

A few days after my reply to your *Retrospective Politician* was offered for publication, it was shown to me marked with a pencil in many places: those marked places, I was told, were by the person to whom it was sent for judgment, considered inadmissible, and that if I did not consent that those parts should be expunged, it would not be published. Observing that still enough remained to fully refute the observations which had been made, and wishing by a fair and candid statement to undeceive the public with respect to the real state of the fabric in question, I readily acquiesced in having the marked passages omitted.

From a thorough conviction that I could give no stronger proofs of candour and honest intention, than by submitting to have my paper curtailed, and that by the person whom I had good reason to suppose was the writer of the article to which it replied. Conceiving that what I had suffered to be suppressed, in justice and in reason, should have

been considered as if it never had been written, and that a manager of a periodical work not only replying to, but with acrimony attacking, that part of an essay he had not the candour to publish; and *that part* which the writer himself consented should be suppressed, takes an unfair advantage of his correspondents. Under all those circumstances, I have been induced to offer for insertion in your work which I esteem, this remonstrance against treatment which I am not alone in thinking both illiberal and unjust.

My respondent says, that whatever of argument was contained in my paper, “has been published, and so far the rights of free discussion have been maintained.” But provided we had disagreed on that point, and that I should have conceived he had marked for omission, what I considered argument essential to my purpose, and insisted on having all or none published. I ask him,—would the rights of free discussion have been maintained by his refusal to give place to my reply? But considering that I did consent to the omission of the marked passages, were the rights of free discussion not invaded, by his endeavouring to divert the attention of the public from my reply, by observing on the parts suppressed—and leading his readers to suppose that those parts were “rancorous, personally abusive, railing, transgressing the bounds of decorum, and deserving of decided reprobation.”—I am decidedly convinced, that any paper really deserving of the castigation my unfortunate essay has undergone, is beneath the notice of the editor or manager of such a work as the *Belfast Magazine*, and that more justice would be done the writer by scouting it altogether, than by advising him to leave out part of it, publish part of it, and

then with virulence attack what the public may never have an opportunity of judging of.

Many well grounded complaints have been made that the Irish press has long been in a shackled and dependent state, and it was hoped from its prospectus, the Belfast Magazine would in some measure rescue it from that state of bondage under which it had laboured, but how far such treatment as I have received will tend towards that desirable purpose may be easily answered. If the managers set themselves up as supreme judges for the public, giving insertion only to productions of their own, or such as may fully meet their approbation,—or garble that which is in opposition to any opinion they may have hazarded, and attack their correspondents—not by arguments, but with abuse—not on what they have thought proper to give to the public, but on what they refuse to publish. I believe few will disagree with me when I say, that the rights of free discussion have not been preserved, nor can the Belfast Magazine be considered the champion of the Irish press—but that so far as that work is concerned, the rights of free discussion have been annihilated and the Irish press degraded—nor can we complain of arbitrary governors, and a keen scented attorney-generals being the only enemies to the liberties of the press.

Be assured, Gentlemen, that had I not the highest respect for the Belfast Magazine, and the most ardent wishes for its success, I would not have put myself to the trouble of thus twice remonstrating against the treatment I have received. And I have taken the liberty of advising you, that my case may be the last of such a nature, more on account of the work, than for the sake of setting the public right respecting my-

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self; as every person I have had any conversation with on the subject (though unknown to be personally concerned) has “decidedly reprobated” the unjust attack made on

SOLON.

THE Proprietors of the Belfast Monthly Magazine, for this one time, admit Solon to appear without alteration, and give a sample of his abusive manner of treating those from whom he differs in sentiment, but until he learns to write with more coolness, they must decline his correspondence in future. The reader may judge from the specimen given in the present, of the intemperate style of his former letter. In violence of expression they have an exact resemblance. The proprietors are determined to exercise the right of judging of papers offered for admission into their pages, and of rejecting such as they disapprove, either in whole, or in part: otherwise, they must become mere cyphers, subject to the caprice of their correspondents, and liable to publish what might be very unfit for the public eye. The conductors of a periodical press must soon sink into slaves, if they are bound to publish all that may be offered, even abuse of themselves, without any exercise of their own discretion. We should then have the licentiousness, not the liberty of the press. Solon was informed, that if he did not agree to leave out parts of his former letter, which were judged unfit for publication, it would not be inserted. He acquiesced in the suppressions, and admits that enough of argument still remained. It was only abuse which was left out, and whatsoever of argument his letter contained, was left untouched. No procedure we conceive could be fairer. The writer of the political retrospect conceives he was strictly

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justifiable in afterwards assigning his reasons for rejecting the parts omitted. Solon's second letter *never reached either the Editor, or the writer of that part of the retrospect which censured his former letter*, notwithstanding Solon's malicious insinuation, that his letter *may* have been lost without meeting the eye of either. Nothing is more unfair than dealing in insinuations. We trust the characters we have hitherto supported in life, will effectually shield us from all such unfair attacks. The writer, who substitutes insinuations instead of argument, forfeits all claims to be admitted into the lists of fair controversy.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON THE WORD PICTURESQUE.

SIR,

IN their refined speculations on the nature and objects of taste, ingenious authors are apt to confuse their readers, and, at length, to grow confused themselves, by an excess of minute attention, which, in reality, brings the subject *too close to the eye* for clear and distinct vision. Truth lies in the natural view of things, not in the microscopical; and after dwelling long on the nice distinctions of philosophical criticism, we find it difficult, by this overstraining of the mental eye, to recognize, what had before, instantly, and instinctively, excited our sympathy, or attracted our admiration.

Thus after all that has been said or sung, with regard to the PICTURESQUE, we cannot help deeming it merely a subdivision of the BEAUTIFUL, and that its nature and effects will be best understood by recurring to the literal meaning of the term Picturesque, i. e. after the manner of painting, in the stile of a

good painter. "Ut pictura, poesis." That is, poetry is or ought to be a speaking picture, or *picturesque*, and poetic images are, chiefly, such lively and picturesque copies of visual impressions, which memory recalls, and fancy combines, in the manner best calculated to attract, and *fix attention*.

The generality of poetic images have been so often brought before us, in wearisome iteration, that such images, themselves mere shadows of impressions of the sense, being thus still farther diluted as it were, into mere shadows of a shade, they lose all power of stimulating the memory, or exciting the imagination. The ear only, is visited by a succession of pleasing sounds, and the words pass over it, without any correspondent ideas; a chosen few have, however, the talent of inverting this order, and by a seeming creation, or by a happy combination, can communicate to the ideas of memory, or to the imagery of fancy, all the liveliness and full effect of actual sensible impressions. "His ardent fancy, says Gibbon, kindled every idea to a sentiment, and every sentiment to a passion." The words, the ideas, the sensible impression, the correspondent feelings, form the links of the chain of association, which genius traverses, like the flame of electricity, with such rapidity indeed, that the effect of the whole on the reader of sensibility, is simultaneous. Hence, the power of ideal imagery, complicated as it is with its train of associations, often exceeds that of our simple, and unconnected sensations.

Whenever the attention of the reader is arrested by the descriptive, or figurative creations or combinations of the poet, in such a manner that the images excited partake in a great degree of the strength and vividness of the sen-